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ABSTRACT

Women veterans provide employers with a new and added source of well-educated, highly trained, and highly motivated employees. Women veterans possess an impressive range of skills in many diverse areas, including functional and administrative support, medical and dental specialties, communications and intelligence gathering, service and supply, and electrical/mechanical equipment repair. The following are among the various agencies and organizations that can help employers considering women veterans for job openings: Defense Outplacement Referral System, National Women Veterans' Conference, American Legion, Retired Officers Association, Disabled American Veterans, and Job Accommodation Network. These agencies provide a variety of services to employers, including job referral, assistance in locating qualified job seekers and matching individuals to specific job openings, and special assistance to employers hiring disabled veterans. Employers should also be aware of certain laws pertaining to the employment of veterans. Legislation exists obligating employers to retain or reinstate certain eligible employees who are veterans or members of the reserve forces. Other legislation requires certain federal contractors to recruit persons with disabilities and certain veteran populations. (MN)

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Facts on Working Women

U.S. Department of Labor
Women's Bureau

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BENEFITS TO EMPLOYERS WHO HIRE WOMEN VETERANS

Background

Nearly 57 million civilian women participate in the nation's labor force. Their impact has increased significantly in the past two decades: Today's women own businesses, supervise employees, and work as craftspeople in nontraditional jobs. Their skills, abilities, and educational levels rank them among the most highly qualified in the world.

Another group of women--those who have served their country in the military--form another significant part of today's work force. Currently, women in the military number 211,000, or 11.2 percent of active-duty military personnel. An additional 150,000, or 13.2 percent, participate in the Selected Reserve forces. In total, there are more than 1.2 million women veterans in the United States and Puerto Rico.

With military downsizings through the mid-1990s, increasing numbers of these women will be available for civilian jobs. The talents and skills they have acquired in the military make them uniquely qualified for today's highly competitive workplaces.

Women Veterans: A New Applicant Pool

Women veterans provide employers with a new and added source of employees. They are well educated, highly trained, and motivated individuals available to meet the needs of both the high-tech and service-oriented industries of today and tomorrow.

Consider these characteristics:

- Women enter the military for the same reasons as men: to serve and protect their country, to continue their education, and enjoy the give-and-take of satisfying work.

- Over 95 percent of all women who serve in the armed forces have a high-school education. Many have attended or graduated from college.

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- Women veterans comprise an applicant pool with a demonstrated ability to work independently and to be part of a team. Many are trained in--and have mastered--management techniques and leadership skills.

- With few exceptions, the skills and experiences acquired by military personnel mirror those needed in the civilian economy.

Skills and Experience Women Veterans Bring to the Workplace

Hiring women veterans can add to workplace competencies and may offer some added advantages. While women veterans' skills run the gamut--from pilots to administrative assistants to mechanics--the following statistics demonstrate their range of expertise:

- About 18 percent of women officers serve as administrators.

- A solid 43 percent of officers have experience as health-care specialists.

Enlisted women possess an equally impressive range of skills:

- 35 percent have functional and administrative support skills.

- 14 percent are medical and dental specialties.

- 11 percent have experience in communications and intelligence gathering.

- 10 percent have worked in service and supply areas.

- 9 percent are trained in electrical/mechanical equipment repair.

During the last 20 years, the skills of women veterans have expanded into nontraditional fields. In 1973 just over 2 percent of active-duty military women served as craft workers, mechanics, and repair specialists. Today that figure has expanded to 17 percent, representing a talented group of women who, as part of the military, have been regularly tested and evaluated on their skills. Many have benefitted from ongoing training as well as cross training in complementary areas such as personnel, equal employment opportunity, and recreational services.

Additionally, women who have served in the military have acquired many of the workplace basics that employers value, including self-discipline, adaptability, and a sense of responsibility. Those who are highly trained bring leadership skills to the workplace. In addition, most women who have served in the armed forces are comfortable with goal setting and problem solving. Those who opt to join the Selected Reserves continue to receive training in personal development and leadership skills. These skills and work qualities readily translate to the employment setting.

Resources for Employers

For employers considering women veterans for job openings, the following agencies and organizations may offer help:

The Defense Outplacement Referral System (DORS), operated by the Department of Defense, is a mini-resume registry and referral system that provides employers with easy access to military personnel and their spouses who are seeking civilian employment. Under the system, military jobseekers can enter their qualifications, education, type of work they are seeking, and geographic preferences in a computer database. For a nominal fee, employers can tap into this pool of jobseekers by touch-tone telephone and receive up to 25 mini-resumes by fax or up to 100 by mail. Employers can register with DORS by calling: 1-800-727-3677.

DORS subscribers are also eligible to advertise job openings on the system's electronic Transition Bulletin Board (TBB). With compatible computer equipment, they can place their ads electronically via a toll-free number. Those without compatible equipment can fax or mail their ads for the TBB. For additional information about TBB access, contact the DORS number above.

The National Women Veterans' Conference (NWVC) operates a national resource center for women in the military and veterans. For information, call: (303) 433-2119.

The Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), U.S. Department of Labor, has offices in each state. Please check the "Federal Government" listing of the telephone directory for the nearest location.

The national office of VETS can provide additional information and referral assistance to employers. For more information, call: 1-800-4422-VET.

Job service or employment service offices offer employers assistance in locating qualified jobseekers. In most States, employment services are part of the Department of Labor, the Department of Human Services, or are a separate Employment Security agency. Check the telephone directory under "State Government" for the appropriate agency listing.

The American Legion, AMVETS, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Vietnam Veterans of America are among the national veterans service organizations that may be able to help in locating women veterans ready for work. Check the telephone directory for addresses and telephone numbers of local posts.

The Retired Officers Association (TROA) and the Noncommissioned Officers Association (NCOA) also provide employers with help in finding work-ready veterans. TROA's current database lists over 3000 individuals whose qualifications can be matched to available jobs. The NCOA also maintains a database accessible to employers, and sponsors job fairs throughout the United States and abroad. Check the telephone directory for addresses and telephone numbers of local posts of both these organizations.

Disabled American Veterans, Blinded Veterans Association, and Paralyzed Veterans of America are among the service organizations offering help to veterans with disabilities. They are also listed in telephone directories.

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is a national information clearinghouse to aid employers in adapting the workplace for persons with disabilities, including veterans with disabilities. Toll-free numbers: 1-800-526-7234; in West Virginia: 1-800-526-4698.

Additional Information for Employers

Employers should be aware of certain laws pertaining to the employment of veterans. Among them:

- Under the Federal Veterans' Reemployment Rights Statute, employers are obligated to retain or reinstate certain eligible employees who are veterans or members of the reserve forces. For information, call the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS): 1-800-4422-VET.

- Under the Federal Employment Training of Veterans Statute, companies receiving Federal contracts of $10,000 or more must actively recruit persons with disabilities and certain veteran populations (qualified special disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam-era). Again, call the Labor Department's VETS number for more information.

- Workers are protected from discrimination in employment on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, or national origin under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII. In addition, two other pieces of legislation--the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act--prohibit discrimination. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has primary responsibility for enforcement of these laws. Contact the EEOC at 1-800-669-EEOC for additional information or a poster.

The Women's Bureau has developed this fact sheet as part of an ongoing series to help increase employment opportunities for women. For a list of fact sheets or other Bureau publications, please contact:

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